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ABSTRACT

Representatives from seven education policy centers housed in universities teamed up with policy analysts from each of their respective state governments to study how state policy influences who becomes a principal and how these leaders perform. This report represents a critical summary of case studies conducted in seven states: California, Florida, Illinois, Ohio, South Carolina, Texas, and Utah. Government and university policy analysts from each of the seven states reviewed specific policies, statutes, legislative actions, and regulatory codes aimed at the principalship and interviewed 15 principals in each state. Seven state teams looked at personnel management, curriculum and instruction, and children and youth policies to see how they directed principals' work. Essentially, these teams explored what state policy has to say about principal preparation, career development, employment, and performance assessment. Three issues emerge as particularly critical and significant: (1) the most direct and influential state policy approach to school leadership is in the area of entrance standards and procedures; (2) there is a need to define roles and responsibilities clearly for the school principal; and (3) recent efforts at educational reform have yet to provide new concepts of the school principalship. (MLF)

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3313.82 "The principal . . . may collect . . . school savings banks. . . ."

3313.80 All boards of education, all proprietors or principals . . . shall display the United States Flag, not less than five feet in length, over, near, or within all schoolhouses under their control. . . ."

3313.66 ". . . the principal of a public school may suspend a pupil from school for not more than ten school days. . . ."

3737.73 ". . . (A) of this section, principals or persons in charge . . . shall instruct pupils in safety precautions to be taken in case of a tornado alert or warning. . . ."

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State Policy and the School Principal

A Summary of Case Studies From Seven States

THE POLICY CENTER NETWORK

EA 022 324

STATE POLICY AND THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

A Summary of Case Studies From Seven States

Produced by the Policy Center Network

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February 1990

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

by Chris Pipho

EDUCATION COMMISSION OF THE STATES

In general, state policy says very little about the principalship. In Ohio, for example, five specific employment duties are mentioned in code: (1) conduct drills, (2) keep records, (3) follow due process for student discipline, (4) display the American flag and (5) supervise student savings plans. Other duties are subject to local interpretation. Another common duty found in most states was the reporting of child abuse cases. In practice, however, principals have really become the fundamental accountability agents for most school districts.

Some of the important conclusions about the principalship drawn from the case studies include the following:

Preservice Policies

- Preparation and entry is a lockstep process in most states.
- Entry is a matter of persistence and tenacity and not a rigorous search for talent.
- State policy is virtually silent on the attraction of females and minorities into the school of principalship.

Career Development Policies

- State policy does little to influence the nature and quality of professional development.
- Recertification requirements are standardized and generally do not reflect the needs of principals.
- Effective induction programs for first-year principals are largely ignored in state policy.

Employment Policies

- The employment life of a school principal is largely determined by the local school board.
- Few state policies address role, function or specific job responsibilities.

- State policies flow from the state to the district and building and fail to mention the principal.

Performance Assessment

- Performance appraisal policies are not usually defined in state policy.
- No state ties principal performance to school performance.

Curriculum and Instruction

- State policy provides lots of cues but little help in rethinking the job of the principal.
- The confluence of state policies and local interpretations gives conflicting clues as to how a principal should provide instructional leadership.
- The role of the principal as an instructional leader is ill-defined.

Children and Youth

- Principals interviewed said that state policies directed at children and youth are expanding their roles but not expanding their budgets.
- New requirements to service family needs and problems is pulling resources away from existing programs.
- Interagency collaboration or service delivery is growing in importance for principals.

Teachers

- State policy fails to set priorities for principals on the management of instructional personnel.
- Too often the concept of instructional leadership is assumed to be self-evident and not explained in state policy.

The bottom line from the case studies appears to be that principals receive mixed signals on what state policy makers want from them. Restructuring America's schools could result in the ultimate examination of instructional leadership. Maybe it's time for state policy makers and principals to step forward and clarify the role of the building principal.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The impetus for this project was provided by the Policy Center Network, an informal coalition of university-based education policy centers. The network has been meeting since 1987 to:

- Provide support for newly established centers
- Link regional and national organizations involved in education policy analysis
- Engage in collaborative and innovative policy research projects

Representatives from 11 of these centers were involved in designing this project and analyzing the findings. Seven of the centers and their government counterparts were involved in developing case studies in their respective states. All participants devoted considerable time and energy to ensure the success of the project.

Several other individuals and organizations deserve a special note of thanks for their support of the Policy Center Network: Lisa Walker and Michael Usdan from the Institute for Educational Leadership, John Myers from the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), Kent McGuire with the Education Commission of the States (ECS) and Susan Fuhrman from the Center for Policy Research in Education. Kathy Christie of ECS supervised final copy editing and report production.

Two individuals and their respective organizations deserve a special tribute. Bruce Anderson, vice president of the Danforth Foundation, exerted guidance throughout the project, and the Danforth Foundation provided some financial support for project meetings and activities. Chris Pipho, director of the ECS Information Clearinghouse, made arrangements for several of the project meetings and his wise counsel and infectious enthusiasm were greatly appreciated at all times.

Finally, we are indebted to the school principals in the seven states who willingly participated in the interview phase of the project. They shared their views on state policy and made invaluable comments in comparing documented and perceived state policy depictions of the principal's role.

While numerous individuals, institutions and governmental agencies have contributed to this project, the views and findings presented here are those of the project participants. We hope this report will be helpful to those interested in the influence of state policies on the school principal.

OVERVIEW

The "excellence in education" reform movement has placed a great deal of attention on who teaches and how they teach. Since the April 1983 release of *A Nation At Risk*, scores of reports have been published on how teachers are trained, selected, inducted and treated as employees of schools. Hundreds of policies have been enacted at the state level to reshape recruitment, selection, assignment, evaluation, compensation, retention and career options for teachers, but up to this point there has been a fragmented focus on school leadership. Little attention has been directed on the policies and systems that prepare and employ school administrators.

Today, however, states are taking aim at the nature and quality of school administration. Policy makers across many state capitols are showing interest in how state policy relates to the nature and quality of administrative work at the school level. Policy refers to those laws, rules, regulations and special initiatives enacted at the state level that depict who should become a principal and how he or she should perform.

More and more state policy makers, especially governors, want to know which state policies contribute to effective administrative leadership and what policy options are at their disposal to improve the quality of principals. A recent 50-state survey conducted by the National Governors' Association (NGA), *Results in Education: 1989*, concluded that the education community lacks a clear definition or consensus on the role of the principal and how best to prepare people for such jobs.

Because nearly 40% of current public school principals say they will leave their jobs over the next five years, a demographic window exists to influence the status of the school principalship in the immediate future. Moreover, the emphasis on and federal support of effective schools programs place the principal at the center of school restructuring and education reform. The time is ripe for sound policy research on how state policy impacts the nature and quality of administrative work in schools.

Clearly, over the next year or so there is going to be considerable policy activity across the states on the nature and quality of school leadership. NGA is determined to make school leadership and school restructuring the flagship issues for the next wave of reform. The National Policy Board for Educational Administration recently released a detailed blueprint for dramatically reshaping the preparation of school administrators, and, in 1987 the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration identified 10 critical "problem" areas to which state policy should devote some attention:

1. *Lack of a common definition of good educational leadership*

2. *Lack of leader recruitment programs and activities in schools*

3. *Lack of collaboration between school districts and universities on practitioner preparation and inquiry*

4. *Lack of minorities and females in the field of educational administration*

5. *Lack of systematic and well-supported professional development programs for current school administrators*

6. *Failure to recruit quality candidates for preparation programs*

7. *Failure of preparation programs to provide education and training relevant to job demands of school administration*

8. *Lack of sequential learning and rigorous clinical experience in preparation programs*

9. *Lack of licensure systems that promote excellence*

10. *Lack of focus in the educational community on the leadership crisis in the school principalship.*

The analysis provided in this report should help state policy makers as they explore how their own policies influence the nature and quality of school administration and consider alternative policy options.

BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

The project was based on the belief that better and more relevant policy research could be produced through a blending of talents and perspectives across the worlds of the university and state government. It was funded internally through the Policy Center Network and by the Danforth Foundation. Representatives from seven education policy centers housed in universities teamed up with policy analysts from each of their respective state governments to study how state policy influences who becomes a principal and how those leaders perform. This report represents a critical summary of case studies conducted in seven states: California, Florida, Illinois, Ohio, South Carolina, Texas and Utah.

The purpose was to depict public policy relating to school principals across seven states and to develop models of policy research collaboration between university-based education policy centers and governmental analysts (e.g., legislators, legislative research analysts and/or state department of education personnel).

The seven sites were chosen for four reasons:

- The presence of a university-based policy center in the state
- Geographic representation
- Interest in the topic
- Representation of a significant portion of public education in America. Even though they encompass only one-seventh of all states, in terms of numbers of students, numbers of principals, numbers of teachers and monies expended on public education, these seven states combined represent between 30% and 40% of national totals. The table (following page) summarizes the extent to which these seven states constitute the nation's overall student enrollment, teacher and principal workforce and education expenditures.

Project Timeline and Methodology

In December 1988, project participants from the seven states plus representatives from policy centers in Indiana, Virginia and Colorado met in Denver, Colorado, to develop and refine the research design, maximize the project's usefulness to government and university-based analysts and ensure productive working relations. Representatives from ECS and NCSL also participated. They compiled:

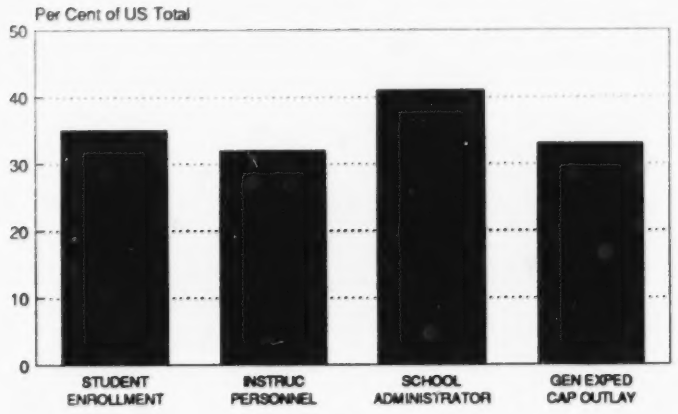
- The most important, policy-relevant issues/questions concerning the nature and quality of the school principalship

- Assignments of resources and responsibilities
- A common set of data collection and analysis guidelines
- An inventory of state policies directed at the school principal
- Project timeline and quality control standards and mechanisms

From January to June 1989, government and university policy analysts from each of the seven states jointly explored how state policy influences the nature and scope of administration at the school level. They reviewed specific policies, statutes, legislative actions and regulatory codes aimed at the principalship and interviewed 15 principals in each state. The goal was to gain a limited but significant understanding of how principals view the influence of their work. Each team then produced a case study on administrator policy in its state. Copies of these seven case studies are available upon request.

In July 1989, project participants met in Chicago, Illinois, at the annual ECS conference to identify and discuss cross-state themes and issues. A five-member writing team was assigned to draft a summary report for all project participants. That report was later reviewed and approved.

THE SEVEN STATES
HOW REPRESENTATIVE ARE THEY?



A SUMMARY OF CASE STUDIES FROM SEVEN STATES

POLICY CENTER NETWORK

It is not the intent of this report to suggest that more state policy is needed and/or desirable. Intervention from the top of the system is not always appropriate. Instead, state policy makers could use this report as one way of examining the role of state policy in the development of administrative quality at the school level.

Generally, state policy does not directly refer to or speak to the school principal, yet the principal is often responsible for the oversight and/or implementation of a broad and diverse array of state policies. From the legal requirement to report suspected child abuse cases to the proper display of the American flag, principals are the *de facto* or *de jure* delegates of state authority. They serve as the fundamental accountability agents for most, if not all, school systems.

Seven state teams looked at personnel management, curriculum and instruction, and children and youth policies to see how they directed principals' work. Essentially, these teams explored what state policy has to say about principal preparation, career development, employment and performance assessment. Findings for each of these dimensions are presented with an emphasis on similarities and dissimilarities across the seven states included in the study.

Preparation Policies

The most important news about state policy related to becoming a principal in these seven states is that it relies largely on bureaucratic rather than professional control. In other words, anybody can obtain a principal's certificate as long as he or she holds two to three years of education work experience, a master's degree, completes university coursework across a broad and often disconnected set of desired competencies, and passes a standardized examination. Entry is largely a matter of persistence and tenacity rather than a rigorous search for talented and committed prospective principals.

The attraction of high-quality principal candidates through magnets (e.g., paid apprenticeships, alternative routes to certification) is not a common state policy strategy. Moreover, state policy is virtually silent on the attraction of females and minorities into the school principalship.

- All seven of the states studied require administrators to have prior work experience as certificated employees in school settings. Five states require three years of prior experience, usually in the classroom, while two states require two years.

- Six of the states require principals to hold a master's degree. California, while not requiring a master's degree, requires extensive postgraduate study for certification.

- Five of the states require applicants to pass some form of standardized examination to secure administrative certification. Ohio has adopted a testing requirement that begins in 1991.

- Six of the states require the completion of an administrative internship before initial certification is awarded.

- All seven specify that certificate seekers must demonstrate competence in instructional leadership, basic administration (e.g., goal setting, problem solving), school management (e.g., programs, funds and facilities) and school law. Six of the states require demonstrated competence (i.e., coursework from university-based training programs) in human relations, personnel management and school finance.

- No state has a definitive policy on the recruitment and preservice preparation of female and minority administrative candidates.

- Five of the states do not distinguish between elementary and high school administrative certification. Only Ohio and South Carolina make clear distinctions about the nature and scope of administrative certification according to school level.

- None of the states studied have explicit policies addressing certification reciprocity agreements with other states. Even though requirements are very similar, administrators must qualify separately in each state. Paperwork and coursework redundancies often result.

- Six of the states in this study do not provide alternative routes to administrative certification (e.g., allowing individuals from noneducational occupations to become school principals).

Career Development Policies

In the last five years, South Carolina has developed several programs designed for the effective induction of early career school administrators: New Principals Academy, New Assistant Principals Institute, Principal Assistantship Program, Minority Administrators Program and the Superintendency Internship Program.

There is a clear indication that state policy does attempt to influence the nature and quality of professional development for school principals. Principal academies are perhaps the most popular state policy strategy to do so. On the other hand, recertification requirements (i.e., specific coursework credit hours earned at universities to renew the professional license) are fairly standardized and do not distinguish the career development needs of elementary, middle/junior high and high school

principals. Finally, state policy largely ignores any responsibility in the support of effective induction programs for first-year administrators.

- None of the seven states differentiates career development and/or recertification requirements for principals employed at various levels of schooling. Three of the states require some form of career development activities for all principals. These career development policies tend to focus on the improvement of instructional leadership strategies and skills.

- Only one state has explicit policy on the professional development for all building-level administrators during the first year on the job. This does not mean, however, that opportunities and programs are not available across the seven states for new or early career school administrators. Professional associations tend to provide resources and programs related to the growth and development of school principals.

- All seven states have some type of state supported administrator academy. Almost all of these academies focus on the improvement of management skills and/or instructional leadership. Most common topics at these academies are: teacher evaluation, instructional supervision, public and interpersonal communication skills and research on effective schools.

- Principal academies across the seven states function in a similar way. All allow involvement of principals in scope and planning activities to varying degrees. All have some form of formal connection to local districts, and six state-supported academies are aligned with universities.

Employment Policies

The Ohio Revised Code expressly designates only five specific employment duties for the school principal — conduct drills, keep records, follow due process for student discipline, display the American flag and supervise student savings plans. In the most literal sense, all other employment responsibilities of the principal are subject to local interpretation.

Recruitment and hiring. Although federal law requires hiring to be non-discriminatory, none of the seven states has policies that provide incentives or programs to recruit and/or hire female or minority administrative candidates.

Contractual agreements. More than half of the states in the study require school boards to provide written contracts for principals. Three states explicitly allow or require multi-year contracts (up to three years). Two states specify minimums for employment contracts.

Collective bargaining. Treatment varies in regard to collective bargaining rights across the seven states. Two states expressly prohibit principals from bargaining with their employing school districts. One state expressly allows principals to organize for collective bargaining.

Assignment and transfers. Several states regulate transfer or reassignment of principals. In most cases, principals may not be reassigned to another job classification during the period their contract is in force.

Compensation. State policy on compensation of administrative personnel can best be described as a mixed bag. One state requires that the principal be the highest-paid employee in the school building. Another state requires that a principal's salary may not be reduced unless there is a uniform salary reduction for all personnel. One state specifies that principals' salaries need not be raised when teachers receive salary increases.

Job security/tenure. In general, principals do not have tenure in the job. Most states allow principals to retain tenure as teachers, but they are not guaranteed tenure as principals. State policy has little to say to principals in terms of job security. The employment life of the school principal is largely determined by the local school board. There are relatively few state policies that explicitly identify the principal in terms of role, function and/or specific responsibility. State policies flow from the state to the local district to the school building, and local interpretation and implementation of state policies aimed at the employment of principals vary widely.

Termination. Several states are quite specific about the removal of a principal from office during the contract period. Due process procedures are stringently identified.

Performance Assessment Policies

Some states are considering performance contracting (i.e., holding principals accountable for specific school performance goals), particularly at a local level, as a viable policy strategy to enhance the quality of school leadership.

State performance appraisal policies for principals generally are not defined nor is there much emphasis on standardization of criteria and procedures across the local school districts. While there is strong state interest in school accountability, no state in the study explicitly tied principal performance assessment to specific school performance measures.

In particular, to what degree do states get involved in the substance of assessment (e.g., specific performance standards) and the process of assessment (e.g., procedural requirements and guidelines)? Several findings emerged.

- Several states are demanding that principals be held accountable to a more precise as well as a more diverse array of student and/or school performance standards (e.g., dropout rates, employability of high school graduates).

- All seven states require that evaluation be tightly aligned with specified job descriptions.

Personnel Management Policies: Teachers

Illinois requires school administrators to be trained every two years in performance appraisal and have a plan for evaluating all teachers at least every two years. Texas requires some form of professional development every year.

State policy often fails to set priorities for principals in terms of the management of instructional personnel. The most important employment responsibilities of the principal are rarely made clear. Even in states where policy requires principals to devote a majority of their time to tasks of instructional leadership (i.e., Illinois, South Carolina and Texas), the concept of instructional leadership is assumed to be self-evident and not explicitly defined in state policy. At best, principals receive mixed signals on what state policy makers want from them.

State policy does require principals to perform certain personnel management functions related to the employment of teachers. The policy network explored these functions along four dimensions.

Support and evaluation of teachers. All seven states have policy provisions that place the principal in the primary role of evaluation of instructional performance. These policies include specific appraisal steps to be followed, required roles of the principal in the evaluation of provisional teachers and procedures to terminate substandard, tenured teachers.

Assignment of teachers. There appears to be moderate state interest in requiring principals to monitor that teachers are teaching in their assigned and appropriately certified instructional areas. California policy makes administrators liable for any assignment outside the teacher's area of certification.

Instructional support function. The states are uneven in terms of what roles they expect principals to play in the supervision of instructional support functions for teachers. South Carolina requires principals to develop plans for teacher involvement in lunchroom supervision. Ohio expects principals to provide teachers with a 30-minute duty-free lunch period.

First-year teachers. There is growing interest across the states in the involvement of principals in the professional induction of first-year teachers, yet no specific state policy exists on this particular role. Texas will have some type of induction program in 1990, however.

Curriculum and Instruction Policies

South Carolina state policy stipulates that a high school principal can obtain a waiver from state-mandated curricular programs for the development of experimental programs.

Across the seven states, only a few generalizations can be drawn about the role of the principal in the development, implementation and assessment of the core technologies of schooling -- curriculum and instruction. State policy provides many cues but little real rethinking of the job of principal in terms of curriculum and instruction. The confluence of state policies and local interpretations leads to inconsistent, incoherent and/or incomplete cues as to how or what to pay attention to on matters of instructional leadership.

In general, state policy provides no clear vision of what constitutes a "good principal." State legislators and the educational community have not agreed on professional standards and on the role of the principal as instructional leader in an effective school.

Courses of study. South Carolina state policy stipulates that a high school principal can obtain a waiver from state-mandated curricular programs for the development of experimental programs.

Only Ohio, South Carolina and Florida specify responsibilities of the principal in monitoring the implementation of courses of study. Florida also specifies responsibilities of principals in the management of instructional materials.

Curriculum and instruction. None of the states' written policy addresses the role of the principal in the development of curriculum revisions and the assessment of the instructional program.

Managerial duties. The seven states are fairly consistent in how they depict the managerial duties of the principal. All of them specify the principal as having responsibilities in personnel management, student discipline, student safety/hygiene/health, and student reports/records (e.g., student attendance, immunization, registration).

Children and Youth Policies

In an age where traditional notions of family and childhood are being radically altered, the question of what impact child and family policies might have on the nature and scope of the school principalship is of importance.

How have principals been affected by the larger web of state policies directed at the protection of and promotion of the well-being of children and youth?

Expanded roles, existing budgets. A large percentage of the principals interviewed in each state see state policies directed at children and families as

Strict state policies and procedures for the handling of child-abuse cases can place the school principal in an awkward position in relation to the child and the family. Because of this, some principals feel they sometimes cannot act in the best interest of the student involved. Although many principals report good working relationships with representatives from service agencies, they occasionally have difficulty getting needed follow-up information on cases because of privacy laws.

expanding their roles without expanding their budgets. New state mandates often do not bring additional funds with them. New requirements to service family needs and problems often are seen as pulling resources away from existing school programs and disrupting the flow of services to students. Illustrative of family support policies with inadequate or no funding are "missing children" legislation (some principals pull instructional aides from classrooms to telephone parents and maintain records) and family crisis intervention assistance teams.

Collaboration. There is growing awareness at the state and local level for the school principal to play a vital role in the collaboration of various support services for families and children considered "at risk." Interagency collabora-ion on matters of problem definition and service delivery is becoming more and more important.

Three Critical Issues

South Carolina has a state-suported principal apprenticeship program. Each year, 50 people are selected from around the state to serve as apprentice principals for one full year. More than 80% of participants in the program subsequently obtained principalships (more than half of them women).

After a review of findings from the seven case studies, three issues emerge as particularly critical and significant. First, the most direct and influential state policy approach to school leadership is in the area of entrance standards and procedures. Second is the need to define roles and responsibilities clearly for the school principal. The third is the realization that recent efforts at educational reform have yet to provide new concepts of the school principalship.

Entrance into the principalship. Because states can determine what principals are supposed to know and do, they have considerable say in determining who is eligible to become principals. All seven states included in this study mandate roughly the same entry process (i.e., teaching experience, master's degree, completion of administrative certification courses at a college or university and a licensure test). Essentially, this is a "come one, come all" approach dependent on bureaucratic regulation with limited concern over professional responsibility and quality control. The state policy mentality in the seven states is to use a series of screens to tease out the pool of school

administrators with little attention placed on aggressively attracting and retaining talented people with strong leadership potential.

Much of the quality control for excellence in school leadership has been delegated by the state to institutions of higher education. However, states do not closely monitor entrance and exit standards of these preservice preparation programs.

Perhaps state policy makers could get the "biggest bang for their buck" by re-examining policies related to entrance into the school principalship. The entrance issue is where state policy has the potential to make the fastest, most significant and most direct impact on principal quality and work.

Clearly defined roles and responsibilities. State policies are interesting in what they say and do not say. Taken as a whole, policy in the seven states included in the study depicts principals first and foremost as middle managers whose job it is to supervise plant and personnel operations. The principal is depicted as an overseer whose main function is to monitor actions and ensure compliance to established policies and standards. Preservice training and entrance requirements reinforce this middle management characterization.

Across the seven states, potential principals are required to take courses in school finance, school law, personnel management, facilities planning, organizational theory and instructional supervision. This view of the school principalship is slightly paradoxical in light of recent calls for the principal to "empower" teachers and to share decision making.

Moreover, interviewed principals said they were constrained by policy mandates, yet state policy seldom directly mentions principals. It is unclear about who or what is driving the nature and scope of principal work.

Another problem is that state policy tends to assume that all principalships are the same. Frequently, distinctions are not made at the state level about being a principal in different types of settings (i.e., urban, suburban and rural) and/or school levels (i.e., elementary, middle/junior high and high school). A "principal *qua* principal" logic is seen in the development and implementation of state policies related to entrance into the profession, effective schools programs, professional development initiates and site-based management efforts.

Overall reform and the school principal. Legislative energies have focused on overall reform with little thought given to administrative reform. State policy leaders set broad goals and allow the "system" an opportunity to translate them into functional programs and practices. In the midst of all this reform activity, the role of the principal is being shaped by default. Principals face multiple expectations which often seem at odds.

The concept of "principal" is considered self-evident and pliable notion adaptable to all types of education reform and organizational change. She or he simply has more to do as new reform initiatives become reality and the paperwork increases. Policy makers seem to be unaware and/or unconcerned

about the new and varied demands education reform places on the school principalship.

What Now?

It may be time for state policy leaders to reassess the impact of state policy on the principal's work. Consequently, here is a set of five questions state policy makers might want to consider as they strive to enhance excellence in school leadership.

- ***How and to what extent do state policies enhance or impede the work of school principals?*** Using "fiscal impact study" logic, states may want to conduct "principal impact studies" to determine how school reform initiatives might change the power and the capacity of the principal.

- ***How are schools recruiting and retaining female and minority principals? How successfully?*** States may want to take a more aggressive stance in their role in the recruitment and promotion of females and minorities into school leadership positions.

- ***Who is responsible for quality control in regard to preservice preparation programs?*** States may want to explore how and how well preparation programs housed in institutions of higher education are doing their job.

- ***Can the state play an effective role in the induction success of first-year principals?*** Local school districts do not all share the same capacity to cultivate and recruit outstanding school leaders. Perhaps states should consider taking a more active role in helping school districts of all shapes and sizes secure and develop exemplary school leaders.

- ***What assumptions undergird state policy in terms of the significant attributes and roles of school principals?*** States may need to be a bit more visionary in setting the professional standards and training requirements for principals, especially within the overall context of school reform.

STATE INITIATIVES WORTH WATCHING

Clearly, state policy makers are beginning to pay considerable attention to the nature and quality of leadership at the building level. Although it is not our intent to endorse these particular policies and programs, the list of policy and programmatic options presented below may provide state policy makers with a sense of what school leadership reforms might be worth watching over the next few years.

- *Special induction programs for first-year school principals, assistant principals and early career female and minority school administrators*
- *Tighter alignment between state certification standards and leadership characteristics identified in recent research on effective schools and effective principals*
- *Special certification standards and training programs for middle school and preschool administrators*
- *Establishment of performance contracts (i.e., continued employment contingent on the attainment of specified school performance measures) for principals*
- *Entry-level tests for individuals seeking initial administrative certification*
- *Administrative certification reciprocity agreements among multi-state regions*
- *Review of entry requirements, approval criteria and procedures for administrative preservice preparation programs*
- *Establishment of a statewide principal assessment center as a step in the initial certification of school administrators*
- *More focus on the goals, criteria and procedures that assess the performance of principals*
- *Partnerships between universities, professional associations and local districts to develop innovative and more relevant preservice preparation and professional development programs*
- *Aggressive identification and recruitment of talented individuals (particularly females and minorities) who show strong leadership potential early in their teaching careers*

CREDITS

Nineteen individuals from university-based policy centers and state governments designed the study, gathered data and analyzed policies. Five individuals served as a writing team that drafted this report. Fifteen were members of seven state research teams who prepared individual state case reports. Four representatives from policy centers who were not primary data collectors assisted with the design and analysis. Individuals are named below and contact information for each is included on the following page.

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